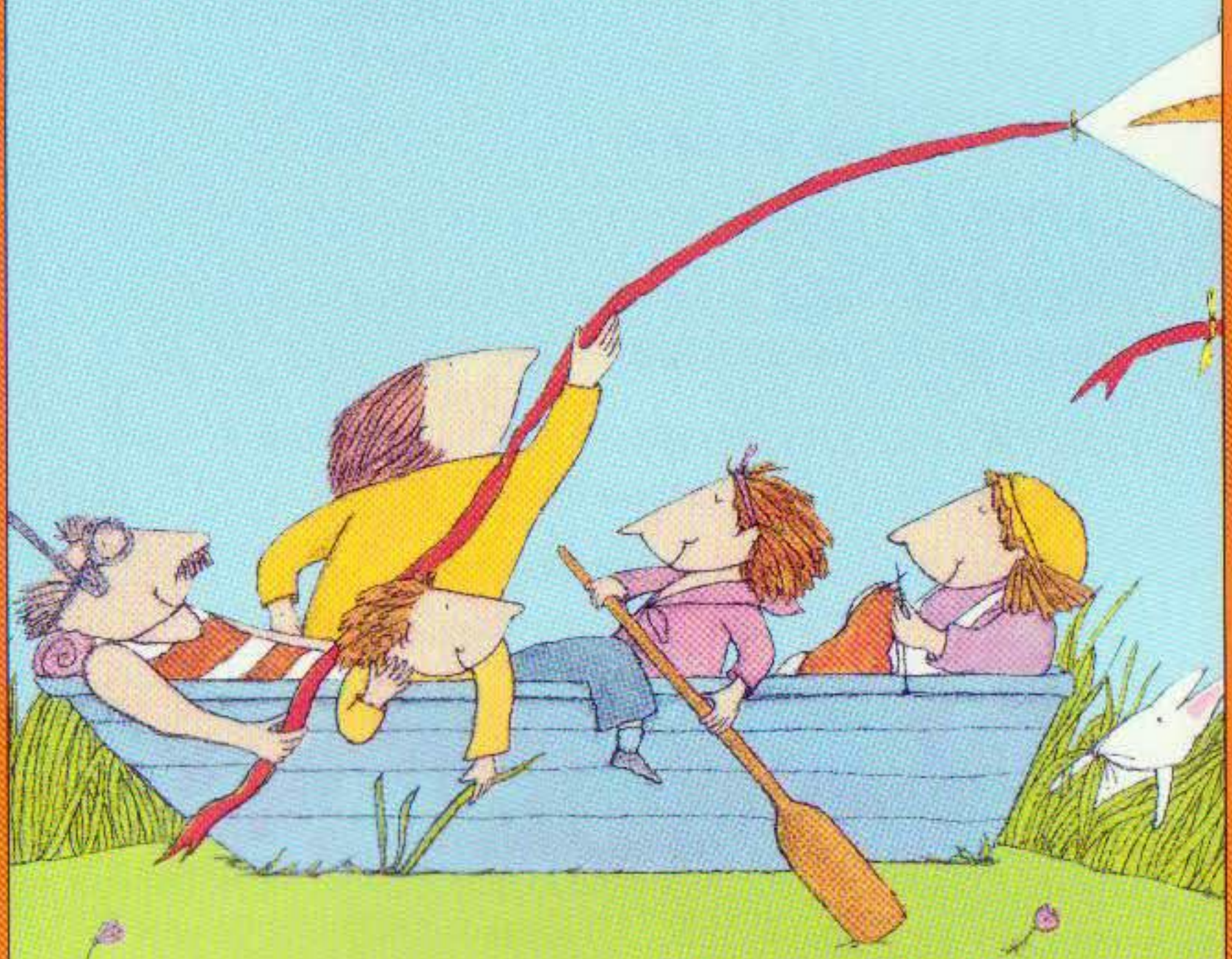
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There Is a Carrot in My Ear

and Other Noodle Tales



Retold by Alvin Schwartz

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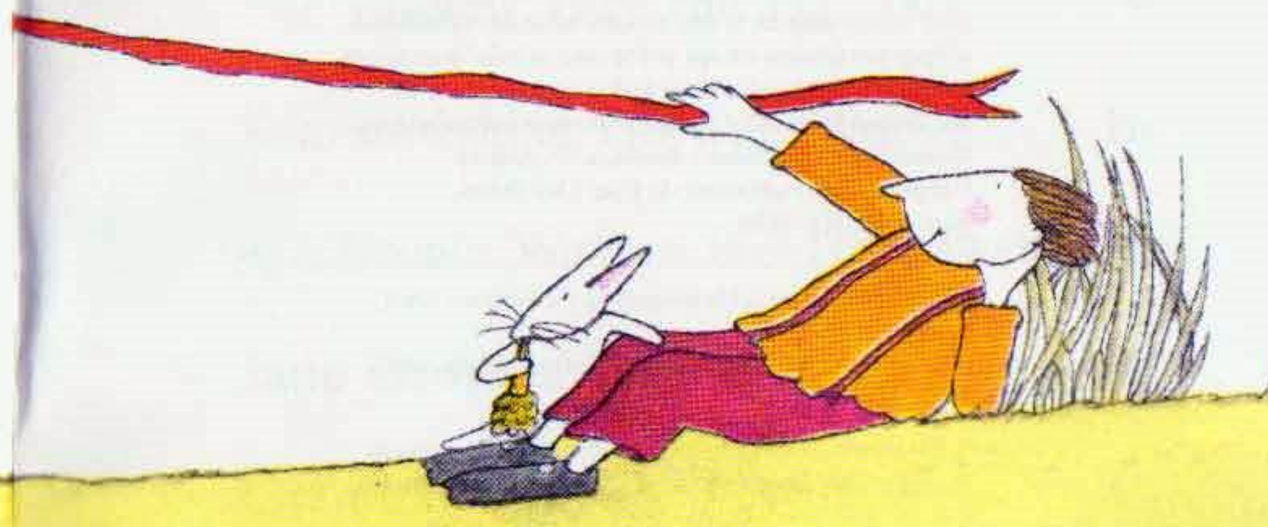
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Contents

Foreword 6

1. The Browns Take the Day Off 9

2. Sam and Jane Go Camping 16

3. Mr. Brown Washes His Underwear 28

4. Jane Grows a Carrot 40

5. Grandpa Buys a Pumpkin Egg 44

6. It Is Time to Go to Sleep 58

Author's Note 64

Foreword

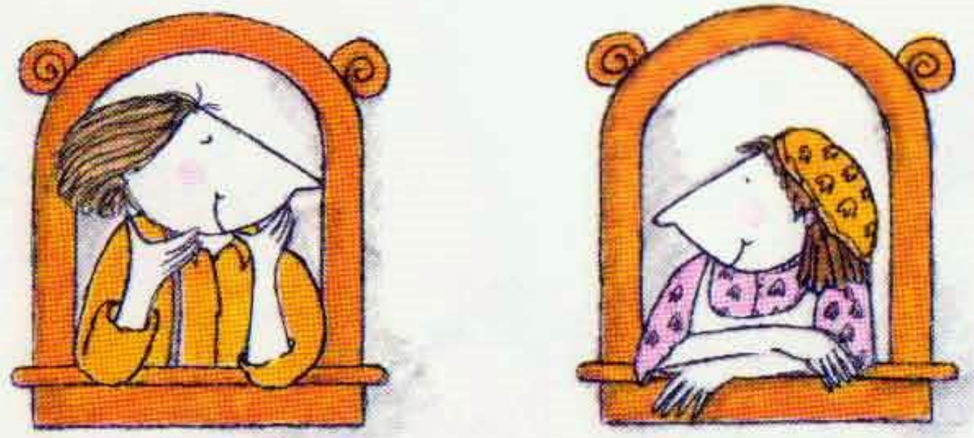
A noodle is a silly person.

This book is about

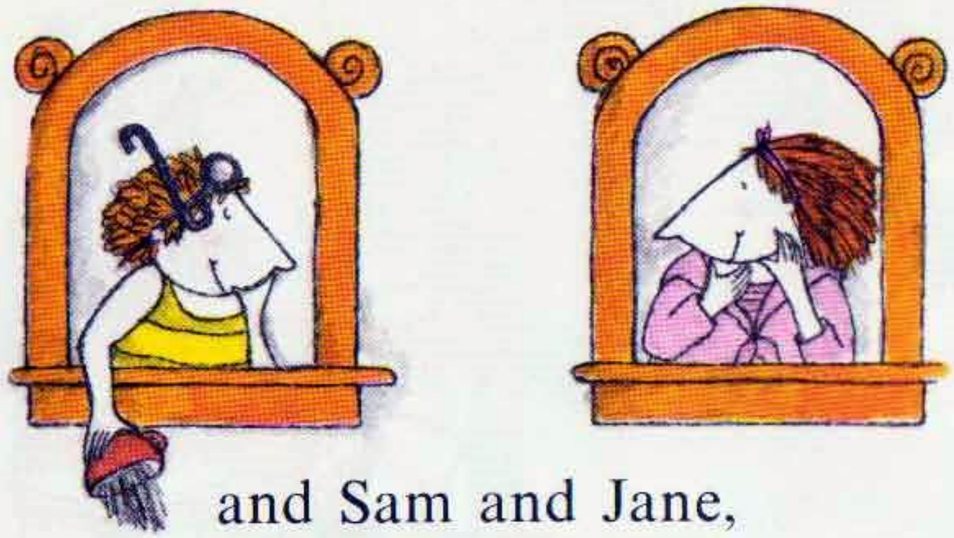
a family of noodles

and the silly things

they say and do.



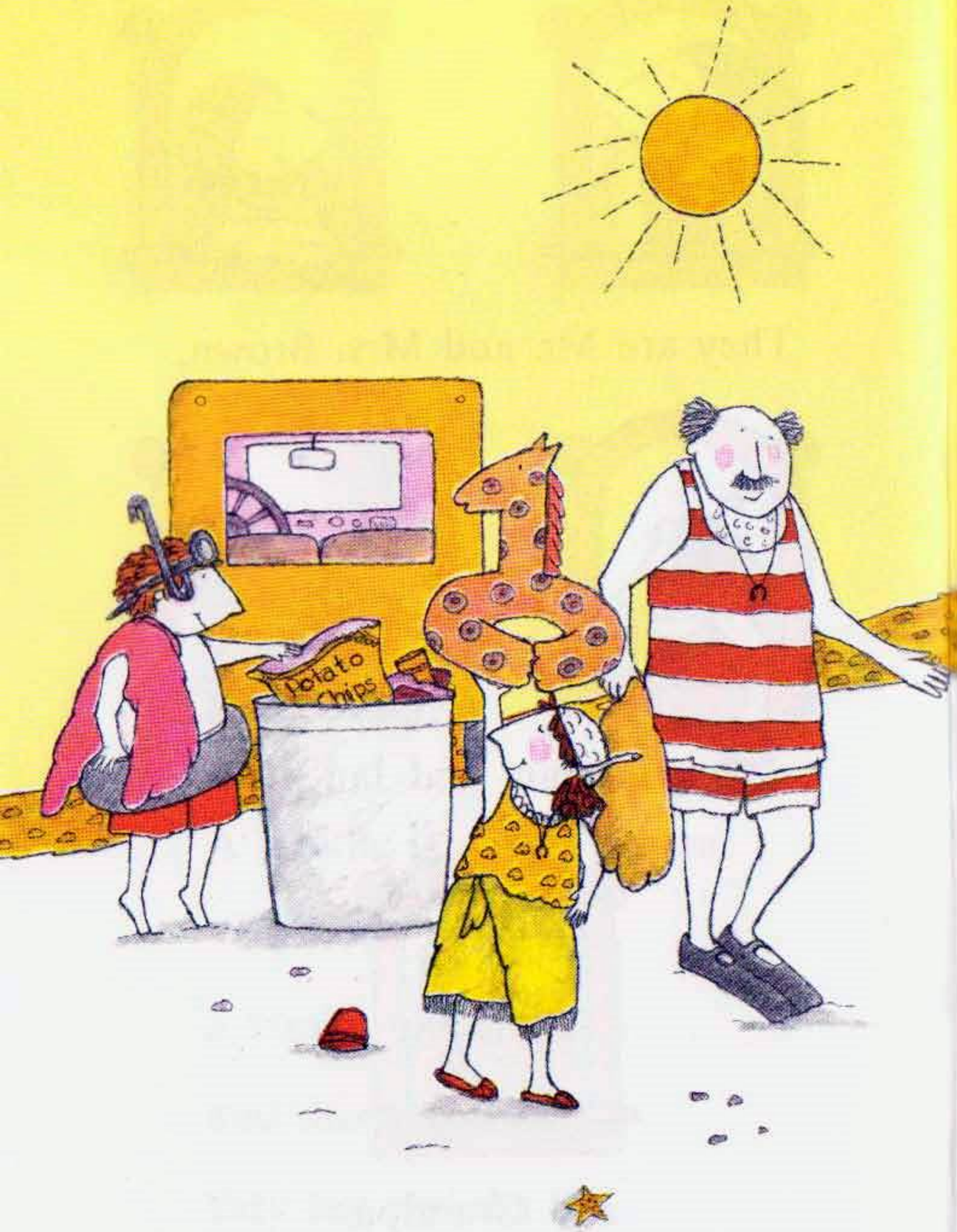
They are Mr. and Mrs. Brown,



and Sam and Jane,



and Grandpa.





1. The Browns Take the Day Off

It was a hot day.

So Mr. Brown took his family to the swimming pool.



Sam and Jane jumped right in.

They raced all the way

to the other end

of the pool.

Then they raced back.





Grandpa jumped in.

Then he jumped up and down.

Each time he came down

he called out,

"Brrrrrrrrrrr!"

Mr. Brown bounced up and down

on the diving board.





Mrs. Brown sat in the sun

and turned bright red.

"It is very nice here today,"

said Jane.

"It will be even nicer on Tuesday,"

said the man with the broom.

"Why?" asked Sam.

"Why?" asked Grandpa.

"Why?" asked Mr. Brown.

"Why?" asked Mrs. Brown.

"On Tuesday,"

said the man with the broom,

"there will be water

in the pool."



2. Sam and Jane

Go Camping

Sam and Jane

were camping out.

When it got dark,

they made a big fire

and told stories.



"This is a story

about Bill, the ghost dog,"

said Jane.

"It is a *very* scary story."

"I hope so," said Sam.

"Once upon a time," said Jane,

"there was a big white dog

named Bill.

Bill had a very mean owner.

He wouldn't feed Bill

or pet him

or anything.

Then one night—"



Suddenly Jane stopped.

She heard a strange sound.

Hmmmmmmmm!

Hmmmmmmmmmmmmm!

HMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMM!

It was getting louder

and louder.



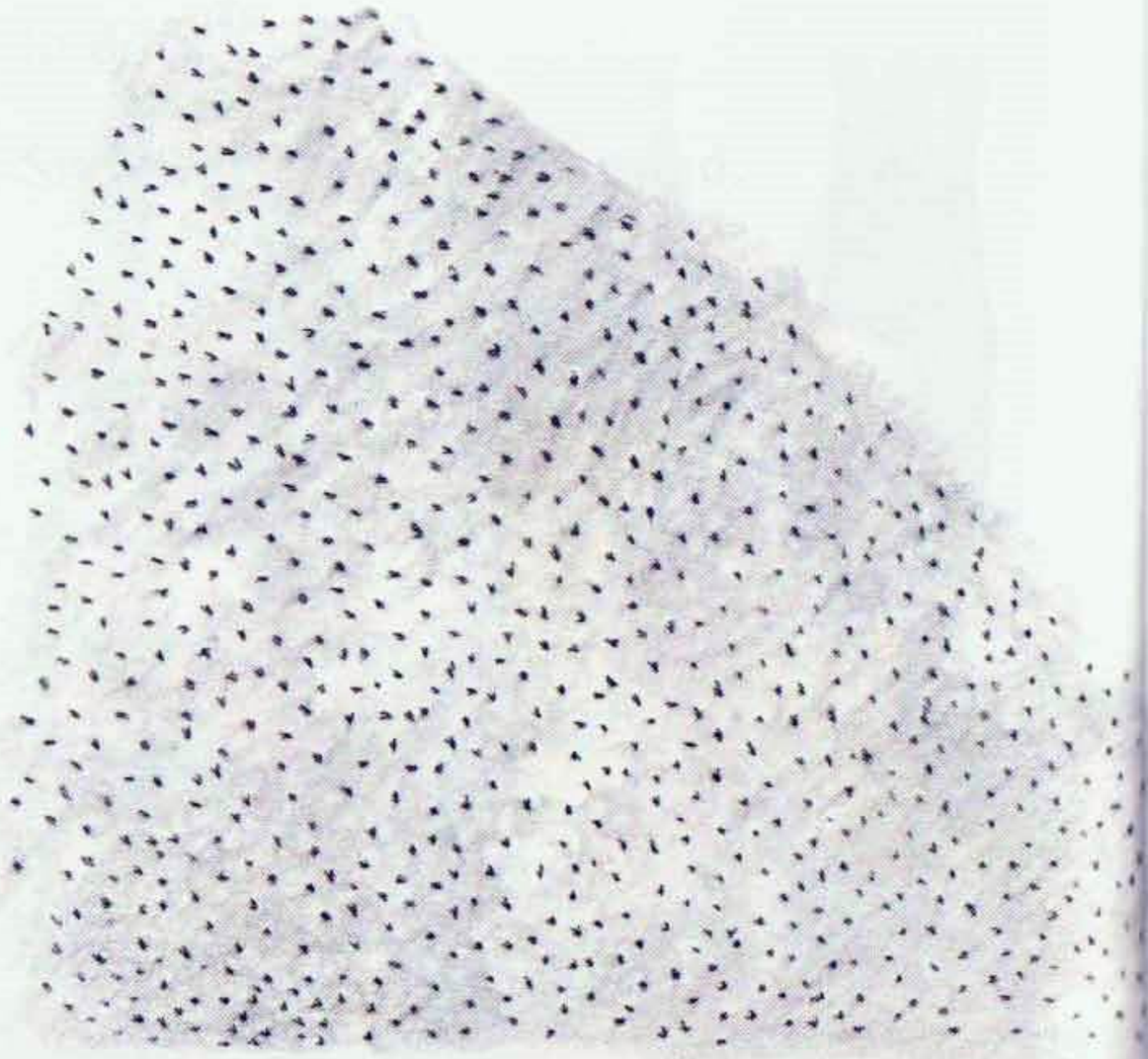


"Ouch!" cried Sam.

"Something bit me!"

"Ouch!" yelled Jane.

"Something bit me, too!"



"It's a bunch of mosquitoes!"

yelled Sam.

They jumped up and down

and ran around

and waved their arms.

But the mosquitoes

would not go away.

"Let's put out the fire,"

whispered Sam.

"They'll never find us

in the dark."



They put out the fire
and sat down on a rock.
A mosquito flew by,
then disappeared.
It was as quiet as a graveyard.
"They are gone!"
whispered Jane.
"I think so,"
whispered Sam.



Then some fireflies flew by.

"Oh, no!" Sam groaned.

"They are back!

And now they are looking for us

with flashlights."



3. Mr. Brown

Washes His Underwear

On Saturday

Mr. Brown washed

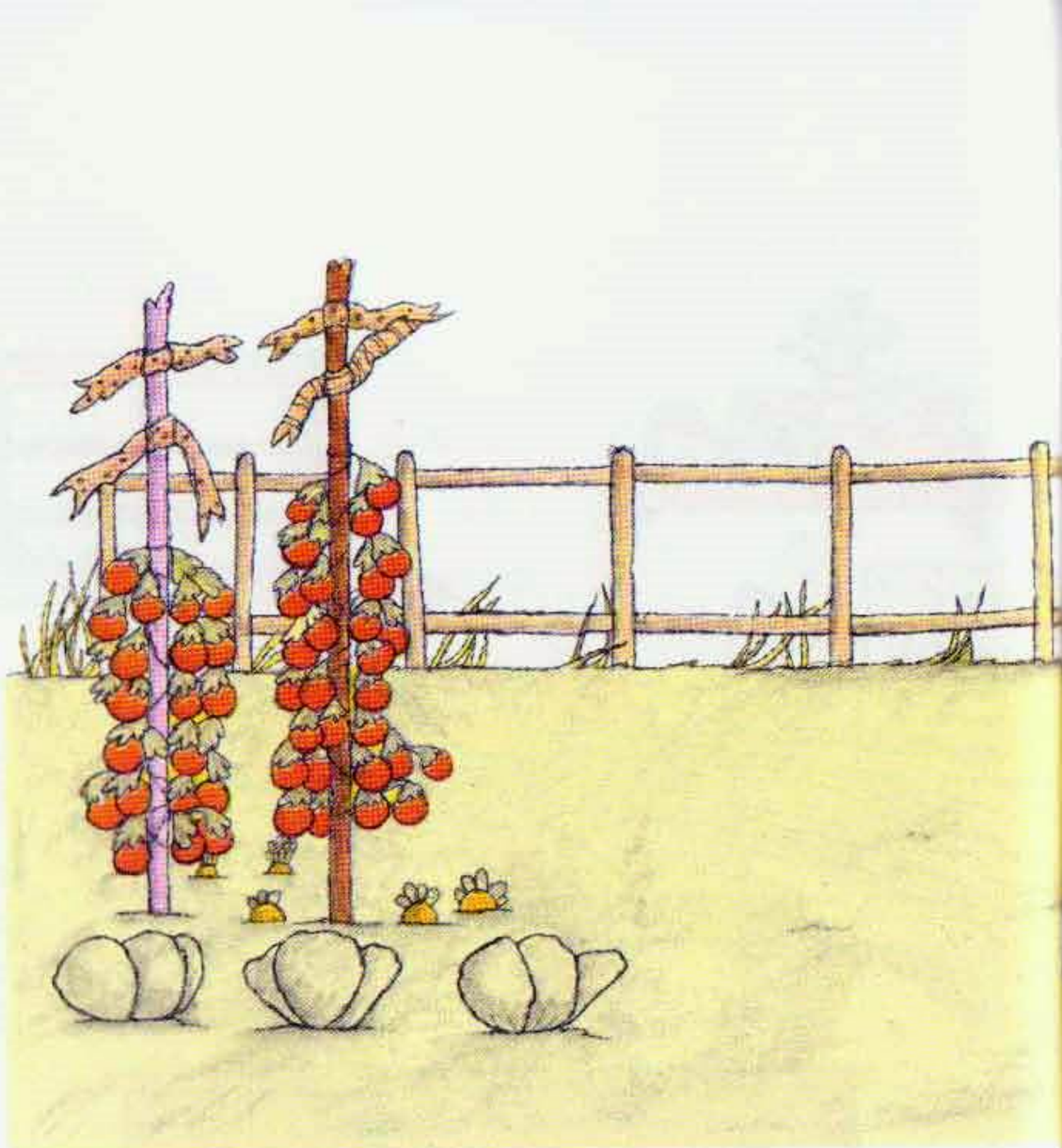
his dirty clothes.

He washed his socks,

his shirts,

and his underwear.





Then he hung them up to dry
in the backyard.
He hung the underwear
in the apple tree.



When the wind blew,
the underwear waved its arms
and kicked its legs.
It looked like a dancing ghost.



After supper that night,

Mrs. Brown looked out the window.

"There is a man in the apple tree,"

she told Mr. Brown.

"Don't worry," he said.

"I will scare him away."

Mr. Brown went into the yard.

He called out,

"Who are you?

What do you want?"

Nobody answered.





He called out again,

"Who are you?

What do you want?"

Again nobody answered.

Mr. Brown got angry.

"You are *very* rude

not to answer me,"

he shouted.

But still there was no answer.



So Mr. Brown picked a ripe tomato,

and he threw it

at the man in the tree.

Then he threw another–

and another,

and another.

"*That* will show you!" he shouted.

The next morning,

he went outside

to get his clothes.

When he got to the apple tree,

he was very surprised.

His underwear was covered

with squashed tomatoes,

and it was dripping

tomato juice.

"I am really lucky

I wasn't wearing

that underwear,"

Mr. Brown said to himself.





4. Jane Grows a Carrot

Jane and Sam

were walking home

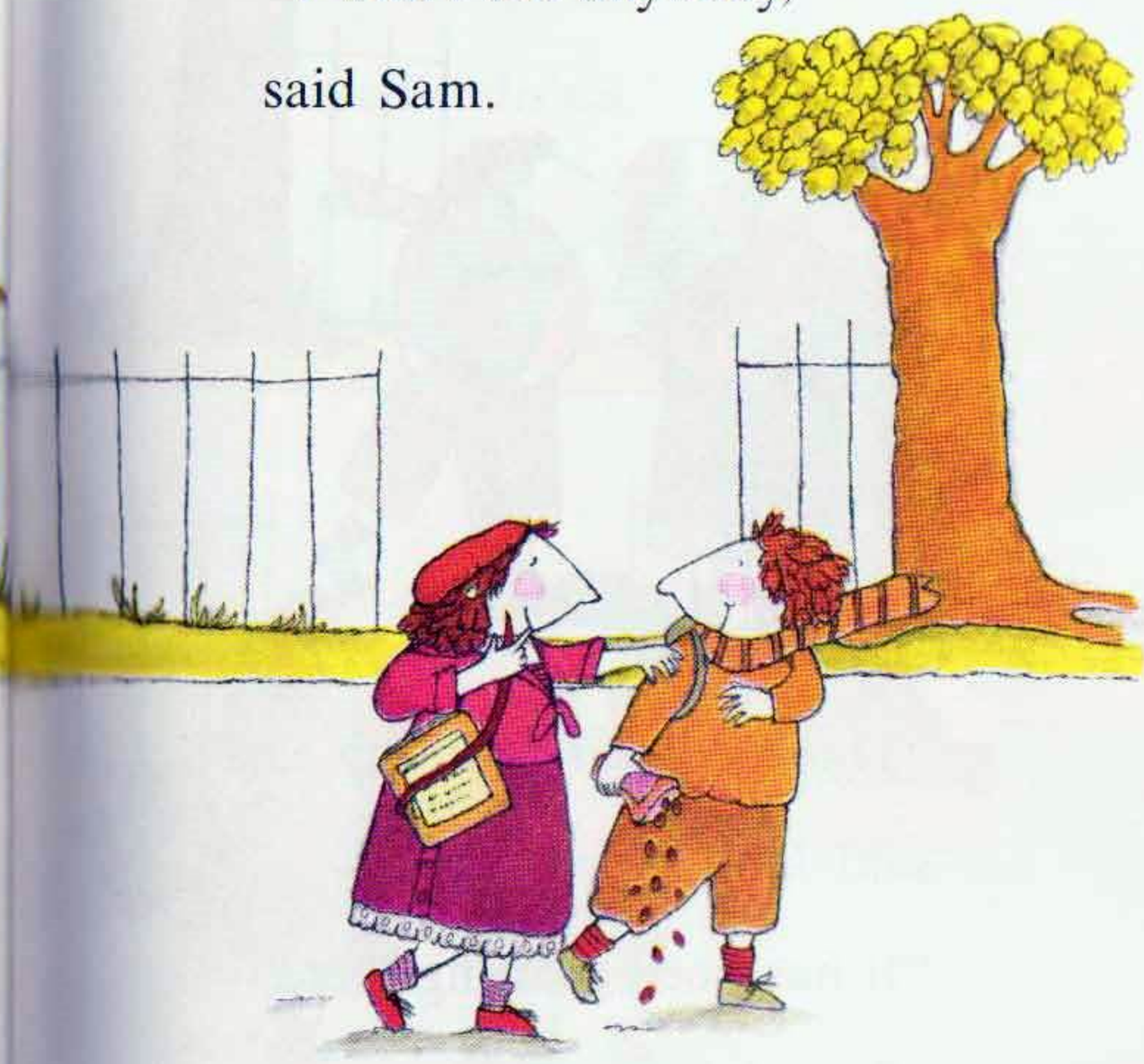
from school.

"I have a secret to tell you,"

said Jane.

"I won't tell anybody,"

said Sam.





"There is a carrot in my ear,"

said Jane.

"It has been growing there

all week."

"That is *very* strange," said Sam.

"How did that happen?"

"I don't know," said Jane.

"I planted radishes."



5. Grandpa Buys a Pumpkin Egg

After breakfast

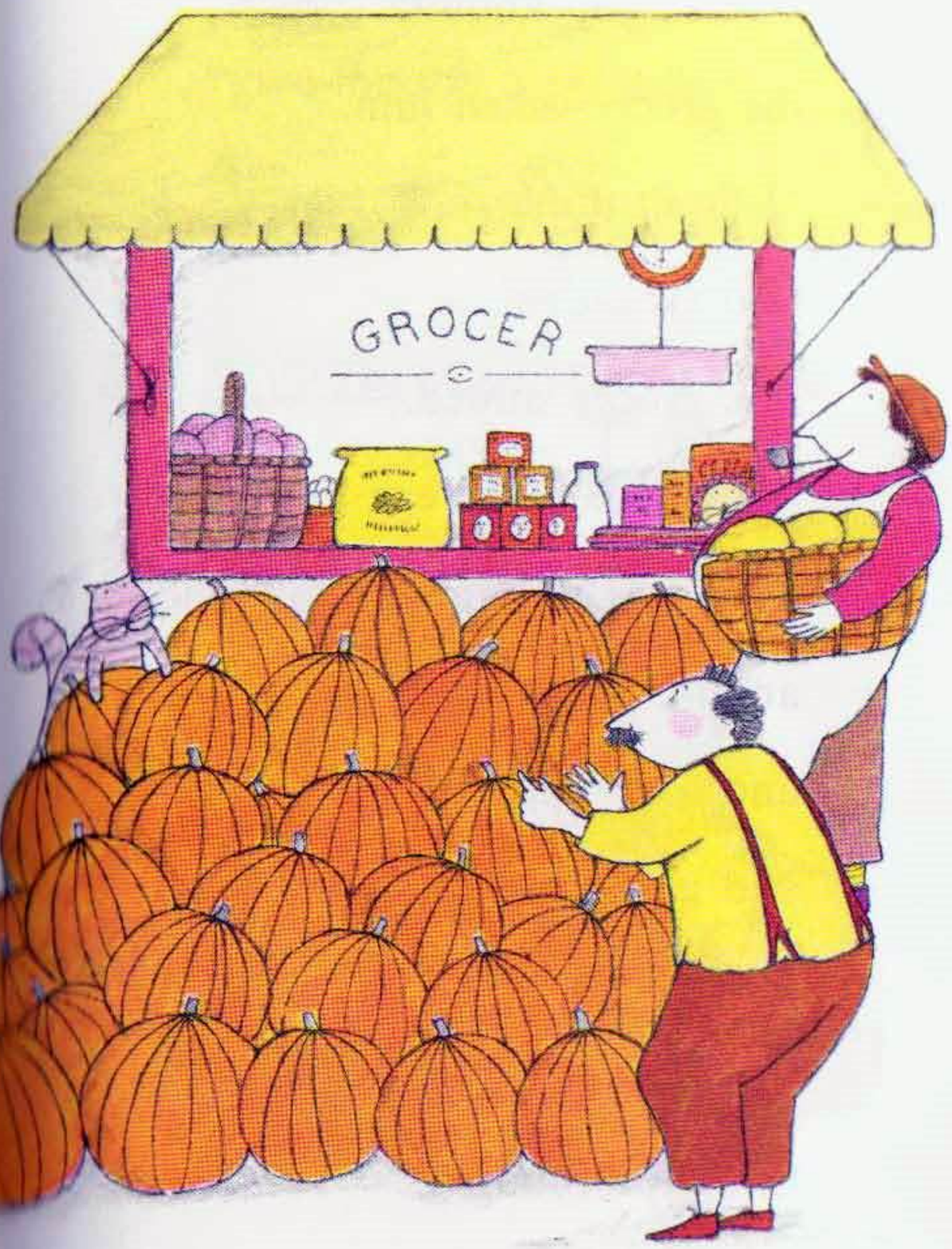
Grandpa took a long walk.

In front of the grocery store

he saw a big pile of pumpkins.

"What are those big round things?"

he asked the grocer.



"Don't you know?"

the grocer asked him.

"I don't think so,"

said Grandpa.

The grocer smiled.

"They are horse eggs," he said.

"You put one in a sunny place

and sit on it for a day

and a night,

and it will hatch

a baby horse."

"I bet Sam would like one!"

Grandpa thought.

"Okay," he said,

"give me the biggest one."



When Grandpa got home,
he put the pumpkin
in the backyard.





Then he went into the kitchen
and got
a chicken leg,
a hard-boiled egg,
some jelly beans,
and some lemonade.
"Now I won't get hungry,"
he said to himself.



Then he sat on the pumpkin,

and he waited.

He sat all that day,

and he sat all that night.





By the next morning

he was so tired

he fell asleep

and fell off the pumpkin.



When that happened,

the pumpkin started rolling

down the hill.

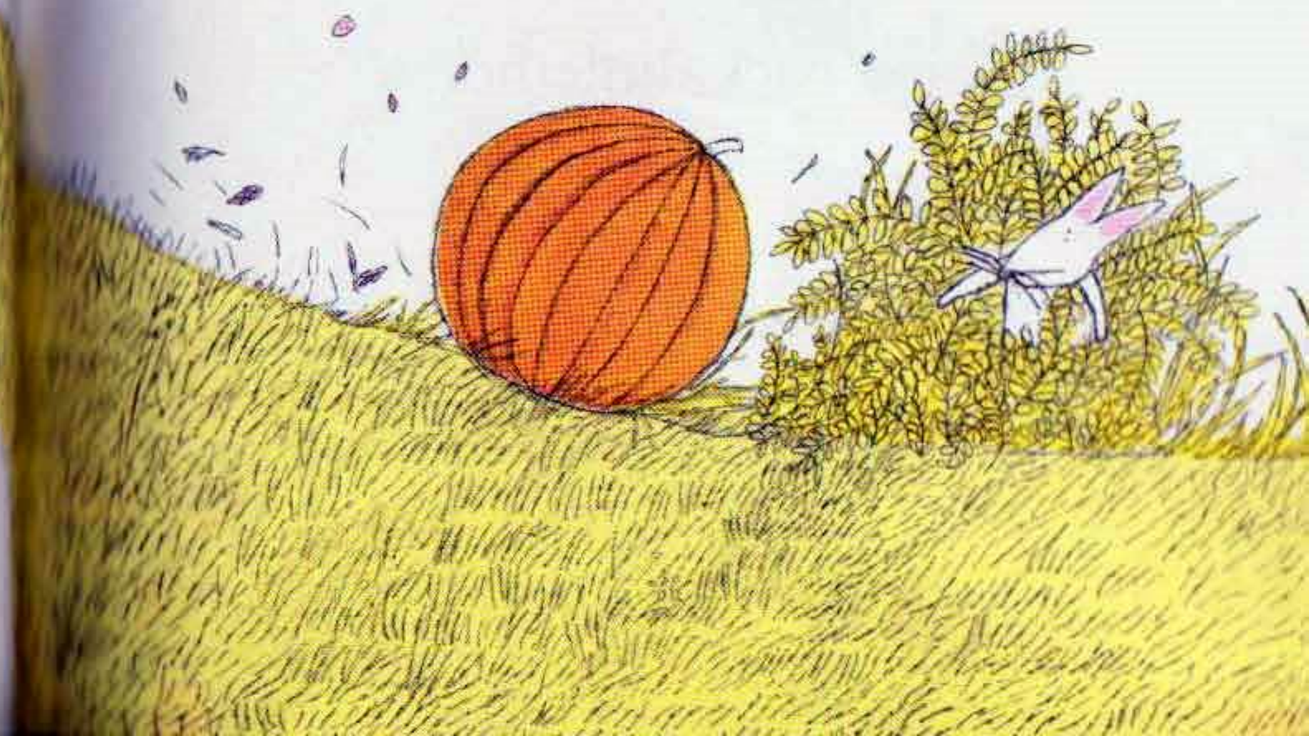
It rolled and it rolled

until it crashed

into a bush.

A rabbit was sitting

inside the bush.





When the pumpkin rolled in,

the rabbit jumped out

and started running.

Grandpa saw the rabbit,

and he got very excited.

"Come back, little horse!"

he called.

"Come back!"

But the rabbit kept running.



Grandpa went to see the grocer again.

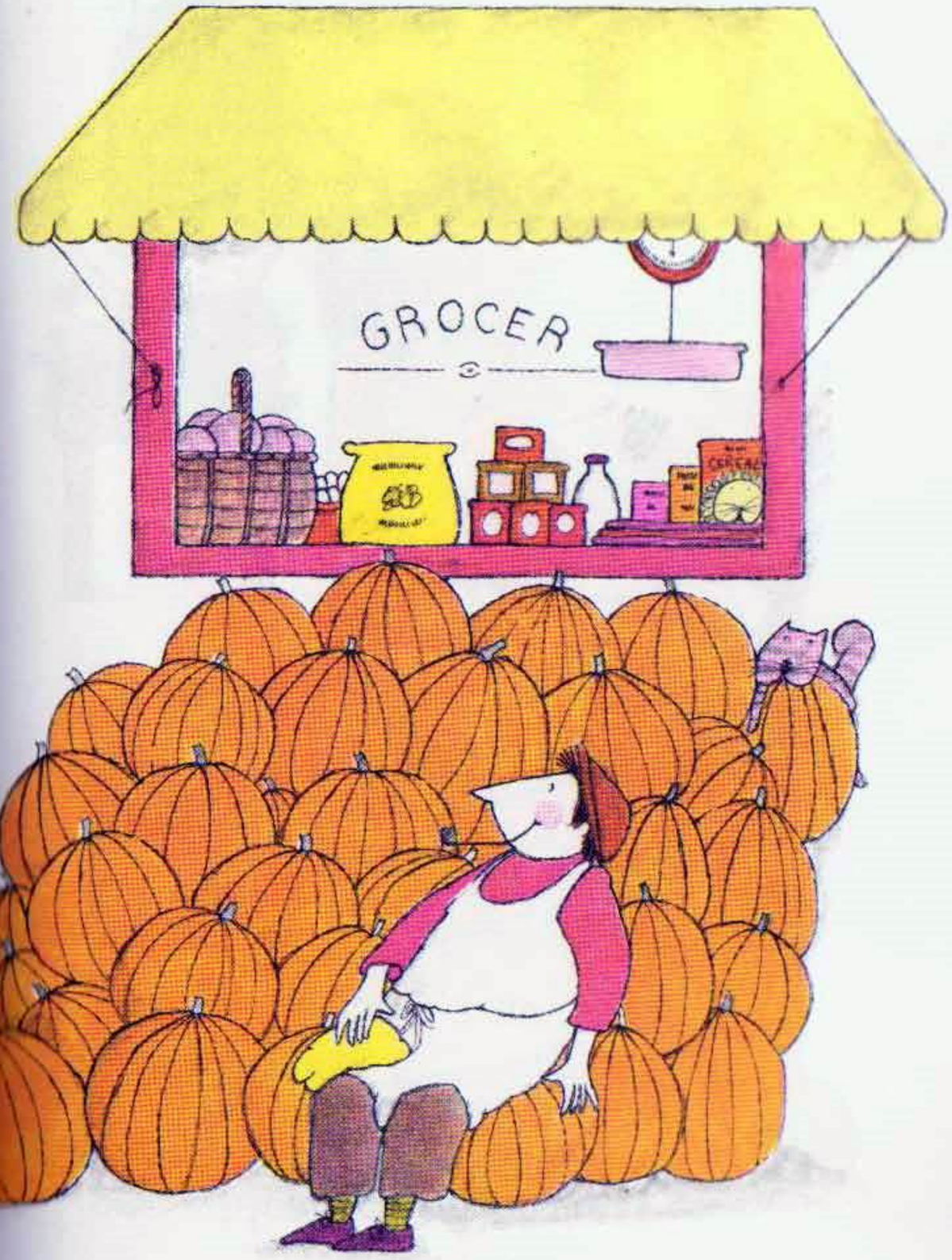
"I want my money back," he said.

"Why?" asked the grocer.

"Well," said Grandpa,

"the egg hatched all right.

But the baby horse ran away."





6. It Is Time to Go to Sleep

"It is ten o'clock,"

Mrs. Brown called out.

"Time to go to sleep!"

"I am taking my ruler to bed,"

said Sam.

"I want to know

how long I sleep."







"I am taking my bicycle to bed,"

said Jane.

"I am tired of walking

in my sleep."

"I am taking

my running shoes to bed,"

said Mr. Brown.

"Last night I dreamed

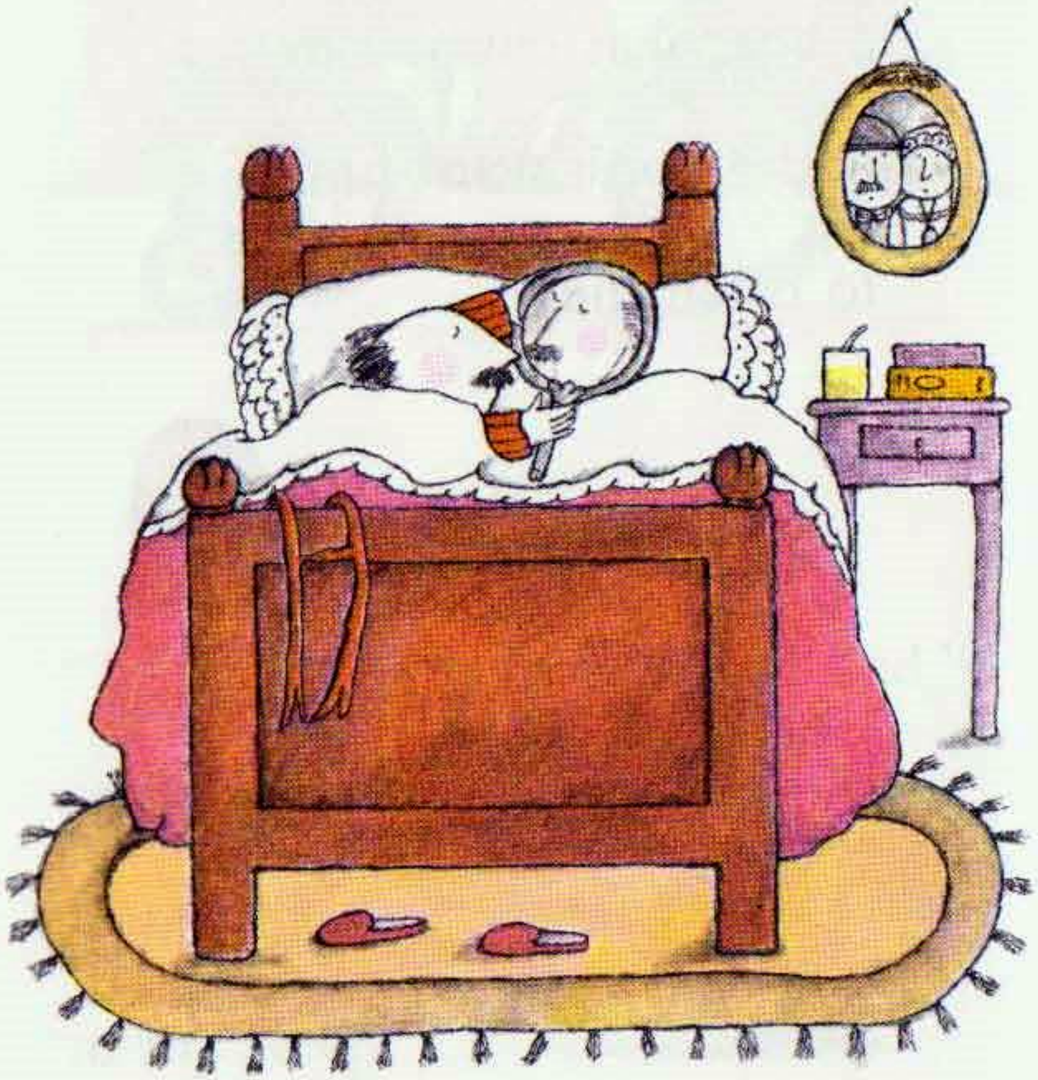
a bear was chasing me,

and I don't want him

to catch me."



"I am taking my mirror to bed,"
said Grandpa.
"I want to see how I look
when I'm asleep."



Then Mr. Brown
said to Mrs. Brown,
"Put the light out
and come to bed."
So Mrs. Brown
put the light out
and came to bed.

And they all went to sleep.



Author's Note

Each of the tales in this book is based on an older noodle tale.

"The Browns Take the Day Off" is from an American "Little Moron" story of the 1940s and 1950s.

"Sam and Jane Go Camping" is from a firefly tale told in Europe and America.

"Mr. Brown Washes His Underwear" is based on a story about the famous Turkish noodle Khoja Nasreddin.

"Jane Grows a Carrot" is from an American vaudeville joke.

"Grandpa Buys a Pumpkin Egg" is based on "The Mare's Egg," a traditional tale told in Europe and America.

"It Is Time to Go to Sleep" is drawn from five noodle tales. "The Ruler" and "The Bicycle" are from "Little Moron" stories. "The Dream" is an ancient Greek tale. "The Mirror" and "Putting the Light Out" are told in Europe and America.

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